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BEAUTY AND CHARM IN EVERYDAY LIVING

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U. S. Department of Agriculture

A radio talk by Gertrude L. Warren, Extension Service, delivered in the National 4-H Club radio program, June 1, 1935, and broadcast by a network of 60 associate NBC radio stations.

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It is a pleasure to chat with you young people on this first day of June regarding beauty and charm in everyday living, particularly after listening to this morning's program, as well as after reading the reports of your work throughout the country. It has been gratifying to note that your own 4-H club programs which you yourselves have planned, indicate in an outstanding way that attention is being increasingly given to those activities that make for happier, more enriched living. During this past year over 400,000 of you were engaged in some phase relating to the beautification of your homes - improving your home furnishings, or making more attractive your home grounds. In addition, nearly every one of you 920,000 club members was engaged voluntarily in some phase of music, art, nature lore, dramatics or recreation contributing much to the general happiness of your own homes and communities.

Nothing is more important in a young person's life than harmonious and inspiring surroundings and no training is worth more than that which enables you young people to provide such for yourselves and your families. In this connection an agent from Georgia writes, "Club members of this county have done some splendid work in refinishing furniture as well as in improving their homes generally. By using their spare time, materials at hand, and a little money, dreary and unattractive rooms have been made lighter and brighter with carefully made or selected furnishings. After improving their own rooms, these young people usually are not satisfied until they work on the other rooms of the house - then these general improvements soon include the interests of sisters, brothers and parents --".

Perhaps one of the most outstanding reports of general improvement is that of the Florida girl who, in her four years of home improvement club work, with the hearty cooperation of her parents, has transformed the entire interior of her home. In addition, she has brought about the enlargement of the back porch, the building of a sun parlor, the installation of a lighting system, the painting of the entire home, and finally the building of a new yard fence. In concluding her report she says, "These are my larger projects but I have also added to the kitchen a refrigerator and to the living room a radio with money earned through my other activities".

It has always been a pleasure to accompany you 4-H young people on your club tours when you visit each other's homes, thereby gaining many good ideas. I remember with delight rooms seen quite some time ago in Maine, Montana, Minnesota, and Virginia. Such rooms often reflect, in an outstanding way, the splendid personalities of the young men and women who have brought the improvements.

And now a word as to the spirit that is so essential for genuine beauty and charm in everyday living - particularly in the Home! For no matter how beautiful any home may be, if it lacks that spirit, it is merely a house with no claim to our fine English word "Home".

(over)

I like the words of our own club song -

"My home must have a friendship with every happy thing
My home must offer comfort for any sorrowing;
And every heart that enters shall hear its music there,
And find some simple beauty that every life may share".

It is that spirit that translates everyday, often dreaded, tasks into happy daily occurrences and that enables many of you to sing while doing them. It is that spirit which gives our homes an atmosphere of love and understanding not only for the free play of our own best thoughts and ideals but also for those of the other members of our family who share home life with us. In concluding, although none of us would suggest becoming slaves to material things, we all cherish the lovely doorway made to bespeak genuine welcome. We cherish the attractive, well-kept home, free from petty annoyances, attained by happy attention to routine tasks. We cherish the carefully set, abundant table with its joyous conversations at meal time, and with fruits and vegetables from the well planned garden that not only sheds its beauty and fragrance about, but that also quickens the imagination and inspires one to reach out for the finer things of life. All these are interwoven parts of the home from which emanates that spirit of friendship, refinement, idealism and integrity which brings beauty and charm in everyday living. And through 4-H club work it is such a home that becomes the goal of every one of you 4-H young men and women in rural America today as you yourselves seek to add beauty and charm to your everyday living!

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